Adventures with Alligators.

A CORRESPONDENT of the New York *Sun* writes from Florida:

I once visited Lake Jessup with Judge Emmons, of Jacksonville. The Judge was a wonderful marksman, as full of fun as a magpie; but he was getting old and his eye-sight was failing. One day we killed a monster alligator on the edge of a marshy canebrake. He had splendid teeth, and the Judge wanted to secure them as mementoes. The painter of the boat was tied to the reptile's leg, and we towed him across an arm of the lake to solid ground. A small ax was borrowed from the house of a "cracker" near by, and we concluded to decapitate the prize, boil the head, and remove the teeth. The body was so large that we could not draw it upon the shore. A stake was cut and pointed, and driven through the jaws of the reptile, pinning him into the mud. The water was probably two feet deep. The Judge drew out a sheath knife, and was about to make an incision, when he was cautioned by a bare-footed negro, who stood on the bank watching the operation with curious eyes.

"Better git shut o' dat ah gatah, shuah," said he, "twell he done gone dead."

"Oh, good heaven!" exclaimed the Judge, "he's been dead an hour. If he was alive, do you reckon he'd allow us to drive a stake through him?"

"No gatah am dead till de sun am gone down," the darkie observed.

The Judge laughed, and passed me the knife. I inserted the blade in a bullet hole near the shoulder, and cut a gash in the flesh, following the trend of the diamond-shaped scales beneath the skin. Judge Emmons stood near the monster's tail. The knife penetrated the quivering flesh and was stained with blood. As quick as a flash the tail shot from the water and the Judge was knocked fully ten feet. The reptile raised its head, stake and all, and sailed out into the lake like a submarine battery. Judge Emmons lost his glasses, but was fortunately unhurt. The incident, however, convinced him that it was dangerous to fool with a dead alligator until after sundown.

In the winter of 1875 I was encamped in the great Turnbull Swamp, ninety miles south of St. Augustine, hunting deer, bears, wildcats, cougars and wild turkeys. There was a great drought, and the savannas and swamps were dry. Scores of alligators paraded the dry savannas in search of water. One day Captain Frank Sams and Tom Murray, two well-known guides, rode past the encampment. They were looking for sour orange stumps, with the intention of transplanting and grafting them. A hundred yards from camp they reined in their horses on a burnt savanna and began to shout. Snatching a double-barreled gun, I ran out on the savanna. Their horses were prancing around an enormous bull alligator, who had crawled out of the dry swamp, and who was headed for the Hillsborough River. He was confused by the shouts of the guides and the prancing of their horses, and I approached him unseen. Stealing behind him, I ran a long palmetto splinter into his eye. He turned lumberingly over the blackened stubble, and the guides struck at him with cow whips. Driven to wariness, he crouched close to the ground, puffed out his throat, opened his cavernous mouth, and made a noise like the rushing of a wind. A moment afterward I discharged a load of buckshot into each eye. The monster shuddered, and stretched himself in the agonies of death. Captain Sams dismounted and buried his ax in the reptile's tail. The vertebra was severed, and he was no longer dangerous, although there was still life in the tail. It moved slowly and uneasily like the tail of a wounded snake, and the guides declared that it would not die until the setting of the sun. At intervals the cayman roared like a Central Park lion. Toward night I went to the swamp to mark the roosts of wild turkeys. The day was oppressively hot. I was returning toward camp long after dark, when I found myself on the burnt savanna. To my surprise, the whole savanna seemed alive and moving. Nearly worn out with exhaustion, I fancied that my head was reeling, a sure sign of malaria fever. The phenomenon was quickly explained. A thousand buzzards were in camp near the great alligator, awaiting the light of day to secure their prey. A year afterward I found the skeleton of this saurian, and knocked out its teeth. The savanna was then covered with water a foot deep.

Take Care of the Fruit Trees.

FRUIT was tolerated, to some extent, by our Puritan fathers, but only with the express understanding that it should take care of itself. Hoed crops and sowed crops had rights which everybody respected. They were cared for at stated times and seasons; but if fruit trees received attention it was at the last end of a convenient time. Convenient times are scarce, and so fruit trees were left pretty much to their own resources.

Fashions change, and now we hear a good deal about the culture of orchards. Let us see what good culture means. First, it means enough to feed upon and not too much. Some trees are starved and some are surfeited. A soil just right for wheat is about right for fruit. Corn is a gross feeder and will bear more manure than apples or pears, and so, also, will grass. If the land is too rich the trees run to wood: tender, porous wood, too, insuring blight, in the case of pears, and little or no fruit. Generally orchards are starved. In that condition they will bloom abundantly, and bear, as far as they are able, of small, flavorless fruit; but the effort weakens the vitality, dead limbs appear, the whole tree gets ready to die, and, unless it has better care, it does die. Fertilizers at the roots, forking and mulching, thinning of the top so that the nourishment shall be equal to the demand, and, in many cases, thinning of the fruit, will give new vigor and long life to the tree.—*Golden Rule.*

How to Select Provisions.

BEEF should be of a bright red color, well streaked with yellowish fat, and surrounded with a thick outside layer of fat. Good mutton is bright red, with plenty of hard, white fat. Veal and pork should be of a bright flesh color, with an abundance of hard, white, semi-transparent fat. Lamb of the best kind has delicate rosy meat, and white, almost transparent fat. Fresh poultry may be known by its full bright eyes, pliable feet, and moist skin; the best is plump, fat and nearly white. The feet and neck of a chicken suitable for broiling are large in proportion to its size; the tip of the breast bone is soft and easily bent between the fingers. Fish, when fresh, have firm flesh, bright, clear eyes, rigid fins and ruddy gills. Lobsters and crabs must be bright in color and lively in movement. Roots and tubers must be plump, even-sized, with fresh, unshriveled skins, and are good from ripening time until they begin to sprout. All green vegetables should be very crisp, fresh and juicy, and are best just before flowering. Never use skewers, as they cause the meat juices to escape. Never touch lettuce with a knife, as it impairs the flavor and destroys the crispness of the leaf; always tear it apart with the fingers.—*Miss Corson.*

Got to Stand It.

ON one of the hottest corners of Woodward avenue, at high noon yesterday, a small boy with a boot-black's kit sat under the full blaze of a sun pouring down for all it was worth. The boy perspired, roasted, blistered and almost melted, but he had stuck there for half an hour, when a lady passing by halted and said:

"Little boy, aren't you afraid of being sun-struck?"

"Yes, ma'am," was the prompt reply.

"Then why don't you get into the shade?"

"I can't."

"Did any one tell you to wait here?"

"No, marm, but I'm doing it on my own hook. It's awful hot, and I'm most dead, but I've got to stand it."

She looked to see if he was tied, and was about to go on and regard him as the son of a bratal father in a saloon around the corner, when the lad explained:

"There he is now! That boy up there is the chap I was waiting for, and I had to sit out here to see him when he turned the corner. He's the feller that called my sister a poke-eyed rabbit, and I'm going to jump in on him and lick him most to death! I wish you'd hold my box so I can get the bulge on him afore he suspects anything."—*Detroit Free Press.*

PERSONAL AND LITERARY.

"TO ALL my friends I leave kind thoughts," said John Brougham in his will.

A FIRST volume of Bret Harte's "Complete Poetical and Dramatic Works" has appeared in London.

MR. G. W. WILLIAMS, the colored representative from Hamilton County in the Ohio Legislature, is writing a history of the colored race in America.

MR. A. BRONSON ALCOTT cannot remember when he has used any intoxicating liquor. He drinks very little coffee, and has eaten no animal food for fifty years.

THE volume of Shakespeare which Colonel Bob Ingersoll uses instead of a family Bible has inscribed on the back, "The Inspired Book." On the sides is the legend, "The Volume of the Brain." In the middle of the book are blank pages for the family register.

MR. GEORGE BANCROFT is tall, thin and a little stooped. His head is rather small, his face long and thin, his eyes are youthful and kindly, his mouth is expressive of decision. He has thick, white hair, and a long, luxuriant white beard.

A PHILADELPHIA music publisher with an ear for music, has been writing and publishing what he calls "Memories of the Pirates of Penzance." The authors of the opera object to this method of having their airs stolen, and the case is in court to test a man's right to use his memory for his own gain.

MR. J. T. TROWBRIDGE is said to never compose his poems with pen in hand, nor his prose without it. His poetic muse visits him chiefly in the open air during his walks, or while floating in a boat on the pond near his house. He often holds as many as fifty lines in his mind in this way, and in writing them down he revises them repeatedly.

THE German Empire has commissioned Baron Max Maria Von Weber, son of the composer, Carl Maria Von Weber, to visit this country during the summer and study and report upon the American system of internal navigation and cheap railroads. He is an engineer of great reputation and familiar with railways, having been manager of the Saxon State Railroad.

PROF. LOUNSBURY has discovered a new use for slang. He says it is the tendency of language in the hands of the literary class to become formal and dead; and that slang phrases having their origin in popular usage, and being coined out of actual experiences, by a process of natural selection become the feeders of the literary language of the people; so that it often happens that what is vulgar in one age is classic in the next. He derides the idea that language needs watching and cannot be trusted to the people at large.

HUMOROUS.

A BOSTONIAN, who was nominated for a political office went to his wife and said that before he accepted he wanted to know whether any member of her family had ever been engaged in any disreputable transactions. She said, "Better decline."—*N. Y. Herald.*

WOMEN with banged hair are deceitful. They cover up their show of intellect, and a man will marry one of them, expecting to have a good-natured fool for a wife; but she'll turn out smarter'n than chain lightning, and make him dance all the household hornpipes.—*New Haven Register.*

SACRED concerts are given at Long Branch and Coney Island every Sunday night. A sacred concert consists of twenty per centum of oratorios played in waltz and polka time, twenty per centum of "prayers" from operas, twenty per centum of sentiment, and forty per centum of "Pinafore" and "Sho fly."—*Boston Post.*

ONE afternoon there was a crowd of excited colored men in an alley gathered around two negro boys who had clinched each other and were fighting away for dear life on the ground. There was one negro man present and he urged the combatants not to give up. "Gouge him in de eye, Bill." "Sam, if you give in I'll tan yer hide for yer." A well-dressed gentleman stopped and said to the negro man: "You ought to be ashamed of yourself to encourage those boys to fight." "Why, Lor' boss," was the response, "dem's my own children."—*Galveston News.*

WE met a Dutch citizen coming up from the depot the other day. He seemed greatly excited, and we asked him what was the trouble. "Dere vas droobles enough," he replied. "I vas gitting my poots plucked in dot depot ven a boliceman gome along, und he dold me to git my feet oud of der vay so dot der drain of cars could git inside der depot. Dis vas der tirsd dime my feet vas efer insulted. I vill report him at headquarters, I bed you. I don't care a shuck for his prass coat und plue buttons. He vill findt out dot I vas not porn a pig fool for nodings."—*Cincinnati Saturday Night.*

A WOMAN isn't fit to have a baby who doesn't know how hold it.—*Ex.* But a woman does know how to hold it. It is a man whose education has been neglected in this particular. A woman will go to the crib with her eyes shut and pick the infant right side up twelve times out of a possible dozen, while ignorant man fumbles among the laces and embroidery and coveriets and things, with his eyes wide open, and the chances are eight out of nine that when he lifts the youngster the blood will rush into its head.—*Norris'own Herald.*

Purity of Water.

SOME very instructive remarks were made recently by Prof. Huxley, during the criticism of a paper by Dr. Tidy, on water for dietetic purposes. Dr. Tidy's paper, Prof. Huxley thought, contained a good deal of what might be called "biological turbidity," and he would, therefore, endeavor to act as a filter, and state only what were demonstrable facts. Diseases caused by what people, not wisely, call germs, such as splenic fever, pig-typhoid, etc., are caused invariably by bodies of the nature of bacteria, and these bodies could be cultivated through twenty or thirty generations, and then, when given to the ox or the pig, would invariably give rise to the characteristic disease. We have no reason even to imagine that anybody capable of causing disease by such means could be anything but a body having the nature of bacterium. Now, bacteria are just as much plants as mushrooms or cabbages or the Wellingtonia gigantea, so that we know under what conditions bacteria can live and what they will do. Bacteria can be sown, and will thrive in Pasteur's solution just as cress or mustard in the soil; and Prof. Roscoe, an eminent chemist, thinks it doubtful whether there was any known method to ascertain whether if a drop of this solution were placed in a gallon of water its constituents could be estimated. Every cubic inch of such water would contain fifty thousand to one hundred thousand bacteria, and one drop of it would be capable of exciting putrefactive fermentation in any substance capable of undergoing that fermentation. The human body may be considered as such a substance, and we may conceive of a water containing such organisms which may be as pure as can be as regards chemical analysis, and yet be as regards the human body as deadly as prussic acid. I am aware, continued Prof. Huxley, that this is a terrible conclusion, but it is true, and if the public are guided by percentages they may often be led astray. The real value of a determination of the quantity of organic impurity in a water is that by it a shrewd notion can be obtained as to what has had access to that water. If it be proved that sewage has been mixed with it, there is a very great chance that the excreta of some diseased persons may be there also. On the other hand, water may be chemically gross, yet do harm to no one, the great danger being in the diseased germs.

FRANCE is at present suffering from a plague of wolves, no less than half a million of these animals being estimated to exist in France at the present moment. The damage inflicted by these creatures in their nocturnal raids from forest and mountain is estimated at about 50,000,000 francs annually. The large number of wolves is the more suprising as a regular body known as the Louveterie, and numbering close upon 1,000 men, is maintained specially to keep down wild beasts; but from the returns published it appears that only 355 wolves were killed in 1879. Two bills have been introduced on the subject, and it is proposed to place a high price on the head of each wolf—as high as 200 francs in the case of a known "man-eater."